

THE BOSTON PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE, INC.
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Year III: Fall Semester, 2015

Self Psychology

Instructors: Anna Ornstein and Rafael Ornstein

As a post-Freudian psychoanalytic theory, self psychology is continually undergoing changes and transformations. These changes have two major sources:

The first is related to the fact that the theory as it was originally articulated by Heinz Kohut over a period of less than two decades, contained ideas the meanings of which could only become clear with time and increasing clinical experience. The best example of this is the selfobject concept: originally a purely intrapsychic concept, the concept now includes intersubjective and relational perspectives.

The second major source of changes is related to the fact that there is a continuous, imperceptible influence that all psychoanalytic theories exert on each other. While each theory attempts to preserve its "purity," discussions of clinical material reveal that analysts' private theories (Sandler) have multiple theoretical sources.

This eight one and half hour course can only be an overview in which we will focus on the most essential features of self psychology. We will aim for a systematic presentation recognizing that all psychoanalytic theories have to meet the criteria of inner consistency: all clinical theories are based on clinical observations (transferences) which have to be supported by a theory of development and a theory of psychopathology.

CME Objective:

Self-psychology is a clinically focused theory that bridges theory of development, psychopathology therapeutic process and curative action. By demonstrating knowledge of the precepts of this theory participants will be more skilled in treating a wide range of patients with a sophisticated psychoanalytic approach.

September 17, 2015

Why and how did Heinz Kohut develop a theory of the psychology of the self? What is the place of self psychology in the history of psychoanalysis?

Ornstein, P.H. & Kay, Jerald (1990): Development of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology: A Historical-Conceptual Overview. *Review of Psychiatry* Vol. 9 (eds.) Tasman, A., Goldfinger, S., Kaufman, C., Am. Psychiatric Press, Hillsdale, N.J.
[Available in the [Library](#)]

Learning Objective: Candidates will appreciate the fact that psychoanalytic concepts have to be put into a historical perspective in order to appreciate their meaning at a particular period in the development of the field. We will contrast Self Psychology with the prevailing psychoanalytic theories at the time of its conception. We will discuss the implications of these differences.

September 24, 2015

The methodological underpinning of self psychology: empathy as a mode of observation and the definer of the field.

Kohut, H. (1959). Introspection, Empathy and Psychoanalysis: an examination of the relationship between the mode of observation and theory. *JAPA* 7:459-483, also in: *Search for the Self* (ed.) P.H. Ornstein, 1978, 1:201-232.
[PEP Web Link](#)

Teicholz, J.G. The Analyst's Empathy, Subjectivity, and Authenticity: Affect as the common Denominator, *Progress in Self psychology* 16:33-53. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning objective: To assess, discuss and explain the close relationship between method of observation and the evolution of a new theory.

October 1, 2015

The basic concepts of self psychology; definitions and developmental considerations.

Tolpin, M.(1986). The Self and Its Self-objects: a Different Baby, *Progress in Self Psychology*, 2:115-128. [PEP Web Link](#)

Optional: Teicholz, J. (1999). The Concept of the Self-object. In: *Kohut, Loewald and the Postmoderns*, The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, N.J. [*Available in the [Library](#)*].

Learning Objective: We will identify, and apply the language of self-psychology and review the *definition* of its basic concepts.

October 8, 2015

Questions related to the Oedipus Complex

Ornstein, A. (1983). An Idealizing Transference of the Oedipal Phase. In: *Reflections on Self Psychology* (eds. Lichtenberg, J. Kaplan, S. 135-161, The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, N.J. [*Available in the [Library](#)*]

Optional: Kohut, H. (1997). The Oedipus Complex and The Psychology of the Self In: *Restoration of the Self* Int. U. Press. [*Available in the [Library](#)*]

Learning Objective: We will demonstrate the Self Psychological reformulation of the Oedipus Complex, the fundamental root of neurosis, from the point of view of classic psychoanalytic theory.

October 15, 2015

Comparative Psychoanalysis

Ornstein, P.H. (1990). How to “Enter” a psychoanalytic process conducted by another analyst: A self psychological view. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 10:478-497. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: By reading a Self-Psychological response to a case that the group has read about in another seminar, we will demonstrate the difference in theories.

October 22, 2015

The psychoanalytic process: the selfobject transferences and countertransference in an intersubjective perspective.

Stolorow, R. & Lachmann, F. (1985). The Transference: The future of Illusion, *Annual of Psychoanalysis* (ed.) The Chicago Inst. for Psychoanalysis 12/13:19-37 Int. U. Press, New York. [PEP Web Link](#)

Brandchaft, B (1991). Countertransference in the Analytic Process, *Progress in Self Psychology* 7:99-105. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: We will identify one the foundational concepts in the psychoanalytic process when viewed from a self-psychological perspective.

October 29, 2015

The Interpretive Process, the Process of Working Through and the influence of the analyst’s subjectivity on the analytic process.

Ornstein, P. H. & Ornstein, A. (1985). Clinical Understanding and Explaining: the empathic vantage point. In: *Progress in Self Psychology* (ed.) A. Goldberg, Guilford Press, N.Y. 1:43-61. [PEP Web Link](#)

Jacobs, T.J. (1996). Analysis, Mutual Analysis, and Self-Analysis; on the interplay of minds in the analytic process, *Canadian J. of Psychoanalysis* 4: 255-277. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: We will illustrate and review the concept of the “analytic process”.

November 5, 2015

Assertiveness, Anger, Rage and Destructive Aggression; the clinical and theoretical significance of narcissistic rage.

Kohut, H. (1972). Thoughts on Narcissism and Narcissistic Rage, *Psy. S. Child* 27L360-400, also in: *The Search for the Self* (ed,) Ornstein, P.H., 1978. [PEP Web Link](#)

Ornstein, A. (2012). Self-Abuse and Suicidality; clinical manifestations of chronic narcissistic rage, *The Clinical Problem of Masochism* (eds.) D. Holtzman & N. Kulish, Jason Aronson, N.Y. [Available in the [Library](#)]

Learning Objective: We will demonstrate the *special features* of narcissistic rage and its importance in the clinical situation.